



April 2020

# Brown County Beekeepers Association Newsletter

[www.browncountybeekeepers.com](http://www.browncountybeekeepers.com)

BCBA Mission Statement: We are dedicated to promoting sustainable, responsible, and healthy beekeeping practices in Northeast Wisconsin for both experienced and first-time beekeepers. We strive to create a fun environment where learning opportunities exist for association members and the general public.

*If you do not renew your membership this will be your last newsletter*  
**RENEW Today!**

**Bees produce Liquid Gold:** The average worker bee produces about 1/12<sup>th</sup> teaspoon of honey in her lifetime. To make 1 lb. of honey, honey bees need to visit 2,000,000 flowers.



**YIPPEE**

## The bees are coming!

Important things to do to prepare for your bees..

If you ordered bees check with the supplier to understand status and arrangements to ensure safety for ALL in line with the social distancing guidelines.

- Plan ahead on how you will secure the bees safely for transportation – could be a scary situation if you have to brake suddenly.
- Bring your Bee Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Annual Membership  
\$20 Individual  
\$30 Family  
**Renew online:**  
[www.browncountybeekeepers.com](http://www.browncountybeekeepers.com)

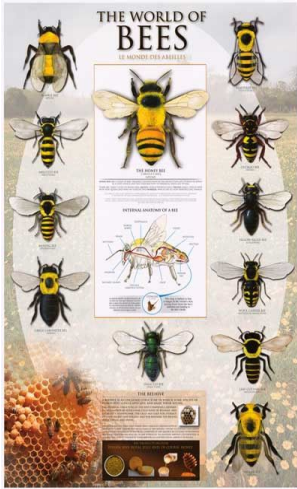
**Send check to:**  
BCBA  
P.O. Box10371  
Green Bay, WI 54307-0371

**THANKS**

**Join us for a Virtual Coffee & Bee Talk Tuesday**  
**4/7/2020 8AM-9AM**  
**Via ZOOM MEETING**



## 2020 Club Calendar



April 15 6:30 PM <b>VIA ZOOM</b>	Spring Prep
APRIL 22 6:30 PM <b>VIA ZOOM</b>	Demonstration: NUC and PACKAGE installation
May 20	Hive Inspection @ the Garden – <b>MB4M</b> Splits
June 17	Mite Treatments
July TBD	Picnic
August 19	Honey Extraction – <b>MB4M</b> Open Topic
September 16	Prep Bees for Winter – <b>Capitol Bees</b>
October 21	Master Beekeeper
November 18	Raising Queens
December 17	Christmas Party?????

### Installing Packages and Nucs



#### Installing a Package of Bees

<https://youtu.be/T9qu-zMhtQ0>



#### Installing a NUC – Bees

<https://youtu.be/ET3A0vSDELQ>

## BCBA Leadership

**President: Dave Elsen**

[president@browncountybeekeepers.com](mailto:president@browncountybeekeepers.com)

**Vice President:**

**Julie Mazzoleni**

[vicepresident@browncountybeekeepers.com](mailto:vicepresident@browncountybeekeepers.com)

**Secretary:**

**Sarah Mueller**

[secretary@browncountybeekeepers.com](mailto:secretary@browncountybeekeepers.com)

**Treasurer:**

**Tom Cashman**

[treasurer@browncountybeekeepers.com](mailto:treasurer@browncountybeekeepers.com)

**Social Media Chair:**

**Carl Fisher**

[Carlfisher22@gmail.com](mailto:Carlfisher22@gmail.com)

**Membership Chair:**

OPEN

**Education Chair:**

OPEN

## A letter from the Brown County Beekeepers Leadership Team

Hello Fellow Brown County Beekeeper Members,

Dave Elsen coming to you from my Social Distancing bunker. Hope all is well with you and that everyone and your families are safe.

There are many developments going on in the world and how this all plays out is certainly unpredictable. What I do know though is that each of us shares a hobby that couldn't be more appropriate in these crazy times. Spending an afternoon on beekeeping is a perfect activity. Checking the weather each day and working on boxes, preparing the bee yard, continuing learning, feeding bees, checking for queen and brood patterns or in some of your cases installing your bees are just some of the items we all will be working on.

Many of these topics were planned to be covered during the education portion of the April meeting. As some of you might know the Botanical Gardens cancelled all April meetings. Knowing this is a critical time for beekeepers, the Leadership Team is actively working on creative ways to continue our meetings and education virtually.

These times foster creativity to try new things in an attempt to stay in touch with our members.

Here is what we are working on:

- Brown County Beekeepers Website - Carl Fisher, BCBA Webmaster, spent considerable time refreshing the website, and it looks excellent. A blog on Spring Management covering Before the Dandelions was posted. Additionally, we posted some follow up posts on Facebook.
- BCBA Facebook site has been changed to allow members to post articles or questions to help members engage with each other. Give it a try. We encourage you to reach out to us with questions through e-mail and Facebook.

In addition to this, the Leadership Team is actively working on ways we can stay connected. ***Here are some of the VIRTUAL OPPORTUNITIES we are planning:***

1. Virtual Coffee and Bee talk - APRIL 7th from 8:00-9:00 AM. We will discuss our hives, and how spring is progressing, packages and nucs that have been ordered, arrival times, what to be prepared for, getting equipment ready, what's needed.. and any questions or concerns you might have. We will use this as a dry run for the April 15th meeting.

### Awesome Bee Facts

#### Bees are Math Genius:

they are able to quickly work out the shortest route from the floral nectar source to save flying time and store just enough honey for the journey – Scientists determined that the bees are even speedier than computers in calculating distance.

#### Bees are Bomb

**Detectors:** Honey Bees have phenomenal smell recognition for finding floral nectar sources and differentiating between floral varieties. Scientists have harnessed this ability to detect explosives hidden by terrorists. Bees are found to be able to “detect the scent of explosives at concentrations as low as 2 parts/ trillion which is = to finding a grain of sand in a swimming pool.

*Shockingfactsabouthoneybees.com*

- Virtual APRIL BCBA Meeting - APRIL 15 - 6:30 PM - Education Topic: SPRING Management - Dave Elsen, Julie Mazzoleni.

On APRIL 14th at 6:30 PM we will offer a short 30-minute test meeting for you to test your setup and connection to ensure you are ready for the 15th. Entirely optional.

- Virtual APRIL BCBA -DEMONSTRATION - APRIL 22 - 6:30 PM -NUC and PACKAGE installation.

Event invite for each meeting will be sent to all club members with the meeting ID and link. Watch your email.

### **ZOOM INSTRUCTIONS to hopefully help make the meetings run smoother**

We are using: ZOOM CLIENT SOFTWARE

To attend virtual meetings, you have two options:

#### **Download the Zoom at [zoom.us](https://zoom.us)**

- Scroll down to the **bottom of the page** (VERY VERY bottom of the page in small font) under **downloads** - Click **Meetings Client**
- Download: Zoom Client for Meetings (Windows and Mac) or Linux  
Or Zoom Mobile Apps (Android and iPhone)
- **A few days before** the meeting we will send you a meeting request for the ZOOM meeting.
- **At the time of the meeting:**
  1. Start Zoom
  2. Click on Join a Meeting.
  3. The “Join Meeting” dialog box will appear. Enter the meeting ID number, or meeting link that will be given, and your name into the dialog box.

#### **Execute Zoom from your Browser (Second option, if you do not want to load Zoom on to your computer)**

When you select the meeting invite URL it will state: “If nothing prompts from browser, click here to launch the meeting or download to run Zoom

If you select click here it then will say, If you can’t download or run the Application, [join from browser](#). Then press [join from browser](#)

One last thing ..... Continued on the following page 😊

**Once this is completed you should be able to get into the meeting. Then enable your Video (if you have a camera) and enable the Audio**



Looking for a few fellow BEEKS to partner with the BCBA leadership team to enhance the club by collaborating in coordinating educational opportunities and supporting membership. Take a seat at the table and have a voice in ideas to support the club. This is a great way to build your beekeeping network and get involved.

Positions needed:

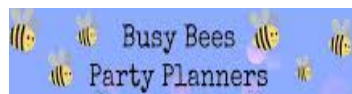
**Education Chair**

**Membership Chair**

Please consider participating.  
Teamwork makes the Dreamwork!

**Contact Dave Elsen**

### Needed



How 'bout the **Summer Picnic in July**  
and perhaps

a good ol' fashioned **Christmas party** to celebrate a great bee season



### Free Education Opportunity

#### **Capitol Bee Supply**

Check out the link below for some **FREE** e-learning topics by  
<https://www.facebook.com/CapitalBeeSupply/posts/2890729754299781>

September 16 club presenter



## A few good links to check out from Cornell University:

Cornell Site that has all of the Info below  
<https://pollinator.cals.cornell.edu/resources/>

### General Bees

[https://pollinator.cals.cornell.edu/sites/pollinator.cals.cornell.edu/files/shared/documents/Wintering%20Bees%20in%20Cold%20Climates\\_accessible1.pdf](https://pollinator.cals.cornell.edu/sites/pollinator.cals.cornell.edu/files/shared/documents/Wintering%20Bees%20in%20Cold%20Climates_accessible1.pdf)

### Bait for Catching Swarms

[https://pollinator.cals.cornell.edu/sites/pollinator.cals.cornell.edu/files/shared/documents/Bait%20Hives%20for%20Honey%20Bees\\_accessible1.pdf](https://pollinator.cals.cornell.edu/sites/pollinator.cals.cornell.edu/files/shared/documents/Bait%20Hives%20for%20Honey%20Bees_accessible1.pdf)



## American Bee Journal discount for club members

### GREAT PUBLICATION

GET INFO FROM TOM CASHMAN

#### BCBA Equipment Rental

See Website for Details

Honey Extractor and Equipment

Infrared Camera



**Connect with Your Bee Supplier:** If you ordered bees, reach out to your supplier to understand the status of orders and what arrangements are being planned. We spoke to two vendors who will meet customers at a safe distance and place bees on a loading dock so you can then get out of your vehicle and pick them up. Puts a new twist on safely handling your bee packages. Also, be mindful when transporting bees to ensure they are secure in the event you hit the brakes. Ideally, they will be in the bed of a truck covered with a blanket, kept out of the sun so you can get them back to the bee yard for timely installation



**FarmHer Donna Yost - Summer Camp at Inspiration Acres, Howard Suamico School district.** BCBA has been invited to do a Honey Bee and pollinator presentation. The date and times for two sessions have been set, one Tuesday June 30th and the second Tuesday July 14th. There will be 190 kids, ages 11-13. *Anyone wanting to volunteer is welcome*, please contact Dave Elsen or Julie Mazzoleni. It will be great fun spending time with kids and talking to them about Honey Bees and pollination...

**Botanical Gardens: Garden Fair**

Friday, May 29 from 12:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Saturday May 30 from 8:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Dick and Carol Sturm are the event coordinators. We have some volunteers signed up for Friday and will need a few more for Saturday. As of now this event is still on.

**Additional Extracting Equipment Available**

In January the club voted on and approved purchasing additional extracting equipment for the club. We ordered the uncapping tub, stainless double sieve, 5-gallon bottling pail with honey gate and an electric uncapping plane which will be available when renting the extracting equipment. Hopefully we will be able to do a club honey extracting day this fall and put some of the equipment to use.

## WHAT IS GOING ON IN THE WORLD OF BEES IN APRIL:

On cold days, the bees are still clustered, but on warm sunny days, they should be bringing in lots of pollen and nectar. If their flights are limited by cold or inclement weather, they may still be at risk of starvation. The colony, if big enough, begins to rear drones in greater numbers.

### Seasonal conditions

In Green Bay Wisconsin:

Average high temperature is 54°F

Average low temperature is 33.8°F

Snowfall: minimal averaging 0.1”

Precipitation averages between 1.2- 4.2”

### What is Blooming?

Maples, crocuses, willows, skunk cabbage and witch hazel are ongoing. Dandelions (*Taraxacum officinale*) are an important source of both pollen and nectar. Deadnettle (*Lamium* spp.), wild strawberry (*Fragaria* spp.), yellow rocket (*Barbarea vulgaris*), Eastern redbuds (*Cercis canadensis*), elm trees (*Ulmus* spp.), and poplar trees (*Populus* spp.).

**Something to think about:** Corn may be planted toward the end of the month; pesticides in the “dust” from planting may pose a threat to colonies.

### Bee Keeping Activities

#### Inspection

- On the warmest days, you can **quickly** inspect a colony’s brood pattern and food stores, taking care not to chill the brood.
- If the bottom brood chamber is empty, move it to the top of the brood nest. Doing so before a day or two of warm temperatures will help brood survive the move.
- **After installing** a new package or nuc, **allow two weeks** for the colony to establish before an inspection.

### Nutrition

- The colony should have at least 3-4 combs full of honey. Feed them if the hive is light or the stores obviously empty, or if the bees are visible through the inner cover at the very top of the hive. Use dry sugar or a candy board, or replace empty combs with combs of capped honey. Sugar syrup is also an option: feed a 1:1 mix in a feeder that holds enough syrup that it doesn’t need refilling every day, but not so much that it gets moldy before the bees finish it. If the bees are reliant on this food, **you will likely need to continue to feed until nectar and pollen are accessible outside.**
- The location/proximity of the bees to their food stores is key. If the cluster is far to one side of the food stores, you can carefully move it closer, keeping it together while you do so, or move frames of honey closer to it.
- You might consider feeding pollen substitute or supplement to support or further stimulate egg laying. If you do so, be sure to use clean pollen.
- Feed package bees or nucs upon their arrival.
- If you plan to rear queens this year, lavishly feed the cell finisher colony chosen in the fall lavishly (carbohydrates and protein) for early spring buildup.

### Pests, parasites, and diseases

- **Begin monthly monitoring** for *Varroa* mites. At this point in the year, if you find two or more mites (per 100 bees) from a sugar shake, ether roll, or alcohol wash, you will want to treat. Treatment methods will depend on your management goals, the condition of the colony, and external conditions. This is an ideal time to use treatments that cannot be used when supers are present.



- If drones are being reared in significant numbers, you can use drone comb for early *Varroa* management, but be sure to return within 28 days at a minimum, to ensure that it doesn't become a haven for mites!
- Carefully check every brood frame in each colony for an American foulbrood infection.
- Cleaning dead bees and detritus off the bottom board during the first thorough inspection may help keep the hive disease- and pest-free

### **Population management**

- Install any new packages or nucs that arrive.
- Equalizing can be accomplished through donating a frame or two of brood from one hive to another or swapping hive locations.
- If your inspection reveals that a queen is underperforming, if you want the vigor of a young queen, or if you want to introduce new stock for hygienic behavior or other traits, you might consider re-queening. This is a good month to do it, although local queens are probably in short supply this early in the year.
- To rear queens yourself this year, continue to build your cell builder colony while preventing it from swarming. Check often for swarm cells, and cut out any you find.

### **Equipment**

- Remove insulation, winter wraps, mouse guards, etc. Entrance reducers can be left on; many beekeepers use them year-round.
- Hive products and services
- Cut-outs tend to be easier this time of year, when populations are low. • Apples are commercially pollinated this month in the Northeast.

### **Yard maintenance**

- If you have a bear fence, check that it is still working properly and replace batteries if necessary.

### **Education and outreach**

- In the event that some colonies did not survive the winter, this is a good time of year to diagnose dead outs and learn from your mistakes.

Adapted from the Cornell University Beekeeping Calendar 2020